

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

APRIL 27, 1858.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. MALLORY made the following

REPORT

[To accompany Bill S. 295.]

The Committee on Naval Affairs, to whom was referred the petition of David D. Porter, a lieutenant in the navy, have had the same under consideration, and report:

The facts involved in this case are fully set forth in a letter from the Fourth Auditor of the Treasury to the Hon. Secretary of the Navy, communicated to the committee in response to a call upon the department for information, and adopted as a part of this report; it is as follows:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
Fourth Auditor's Office, April 20, 1858.

SIR: A letter, addressed to the department by the Hon. S. R. Mallory, chairman of the Committee of the Senate on Naval Affairs, enclosing a petition of Lieutenant David D. Porter, of the United States navy, praying that he may be allowed certain expenses incurred by him some years since while engaged, by order of the department, on secret service in the island of St. Domingo, and which were disallowed by the accounting officers principally upon the ground that they were not chargeable to the ordinary appropriations for the navy, having been referred to this office for a statement of the items thus disallowed, which, in the opinion of this office, are equitably due, and ought to be allowed, I have the honor to report that the sums claimed, but not admitted, were the following:

1. For the entertainment and transportation from place to place, on the island of St. Domingo, of officers of the Dominican government, on board of the United States brig Porpoise, commanded by Lieutenant William E. Hunt, which was placed by the department at the disposal of Lieutenant Porter for assisting him in the performance of the duty upon which he was ordered..... \$350

2. Entertainment of public officers and other persons of influence at the City of St. Domingo.....	\$30
3. Expenses incurred in receiving the governor at Porte Platte.....	20
4. For loss of \$92, in paper currency of the island, in crossing the rivers Barrilegas and Mainon.....	92
5. Loss of other personal property, including clothing, revolver, &c.....	162
6. For a pair of pistols left on board the Spitfire, and for which no receipt was taken.....	30
7. For a travelling sword left on board the Porpoise, for which no receipt was taken.....	14
8. For twenty-two days' detention at Pensacola; twenty in going to St. Domingo, and two on returning.....	45

I am of opinion that it would be equitable to allow Lieutenant Porter all these items, except the 6th, 7th, and part of the 8th.

The expenses of entertaining persons of distinction and influence abroad by the commanding officers of our national vessels, where such expenses have not been extravagant, and have been thought to be required by the dignity of the service or the interests of the United States, have been repeatedly sanctioned by Congress, and it could scarcely be but that such expenditures would be requisite in the performance of such service as was assigned to Lieutenant Porter. The amount, moreover, being very moderate, I have no hesitation in recommending that it be allowed. In judging of the equity of an allowance for losses of property sustained by Lieutenant Porter, it should be considered that he was taken from the ordinary line of naval duty, and despatched upon a hazardous and delicate mission, which would seem more properly to have belonged to a civilian, but which was thought to require, with intelligence and tact, the courage, energy, and disregard of privation, which might more certainly be found in a military officer. He was sent among a semi-barbarous people, in a country replete with dangers, where precipices and mountain passes were to be traversed, and unbridged rivers to be crossed; where, from the roughness of the travelling, his clothing was more than once obliged to be taken from his own person for the relief of the animals he was using, and where, while on his route, he was for some time destitute of shoes or stockings.

His service was perilous and difficult, and he executed it gallantly and well. Under these circumstances, I think it equitable that he should be saved from pecuniary loss, and that he should be allowed the sum he claims for paper money, clothes, and other property lost, to the amount of about two hundred and fifty dollars.

As Lieutenant Porter was ordered to proceed to Pensacola, and there embark in a government vessel for St. Domingo, and upon his arrival there found no vessel ready to receive him, it appears to me reasonable that the expenses of his detention there, on his way out, should be allowed him; but as it does not appear that there was any necessity for his remaining at that place on his return, the same reason for the defraying of his expenses by the government does not exist.

I do not think he ought to receive any allowance for the pistols and sword left on board the Spitfire and Porpoise. If they were public property, he should have taken such receipts for them as would have exonerated him, and if they belonged to him, he does not appear to have exercised such carefulness in regard to them as would give him an equitable claim upon the government for their value.

It is proper for me to state that there are no vouchers in this office beyond the certificate of the petitioner for the expenditures or losses which have been referred to, except receipts for his board at Pensacola, and the statement of Lieutenant Hunt as to the expenses of entertaining the Dominican officers on board the Porpoise.

I do not mean to imply the least doubt, however, of the correctness of the petitioner's representations of the case, for I have none.

The papers referred to me are herewith returned.

I have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
A. O. DAYTON.

Hon. ISAAC TOUCEY,
Secretary of the Navy.

NAVY DEPARTMENT, *April 23, 1858.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 6th instant, enclosing the petition of "Lieutenant David D. Porter, praying that his accounts for certain secret services performed by him in the island of San Domingo, under order of the Secretary of the Navy, may be settled on principles of equity," and requesting such information and suggestions as the department may deem proper to communicate.

In answer to your request I respectfully refer you to the enclosed copy of a letter from the Fourth Auditor, dated April 20, 1858, in whose views and suggestions I fully concur.

Lieutenant Porter's petition and accompanying papers are herewith returned.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

I. TOUCEY.

Hon. S. R. MALLORY,
*Chairman of the Committee on Naval Affairs,
United States Senate.*

Your committee concurring in the views expressed in the letter of the Fourth Auditor, as to the equity of petitioner's claim, report a bill for his relief and recommend its passage.

The first part of the report is devoted to a description of the work done during the last year. It is divided into two main sections, the first of which deals with the work done in the laboratory and the second with the work done in the field. The first section is divided into three parts, the first of which deals with the work done in the laboratory during the last year, the second with the work done in the laboratory during the last year, and the third with the work done in the laboratory during the last year. The second section is divided into two parts, the first of which deals with the work done in the field during the last year, and the second with the work done in the field during the last year.

The second part of the report is devoted to a description of the work done during the last year. It is divided into two main sections, the first of which deals with the work done in the laboratory and the second with the work done in the field. The first section is divided into three parts, the first of which deals with the work done in the laboratory during the last year, the second with the work done in the laboratory during the last year, and the third with the work done in the laboratory during the last year. The second section is divided into two parts, the first of which deals with the work done in the field during the last year, and the second with the work done in the field during the last year.

The third part of the report is devoted to a description of the work done during the last year. It is divided into two main sections, the first of which deals with the work done in the laboratory and the second with the work done in the field. The first section is divided into three parts, the first of which deals with the work done in the laboratory during the last year, the second with the work done in the laboratory during the last year, and the third with the work done in the laboratory during the last year. The second section is divided into two parts, the first of which deals with the work done in the field during the last year, and the second with the work done in the field during the last year.